



1932 election poster

Nazi Reign of Terror 1933-39

The role of propaganda

Propaganda

Propaganda is a form of psychological manipulation, usually to further a political agenda. It involves the promotion of specific ideas or views to persuade others that your 'side of the story' is correct.

Propaganda

Propaganda is “reductive” and emotive in nature -
you reduce complex ideas into a simple form
(image and/or slogan) and
repeat over and over
again

This can be seen in Nazi slogans:

The Jews are our Misfortune

Strength through Joy

Work will set you free



"...Effective propaganda must limit its points of a few and these points must be repeated until even the last member of the audience understands what is meant by them."

Hitler

- The Nazis were master propagandists, especially because they realised the power of the mass media
- They used:
 - radio
 - newspapers
 - public gatherings
 - films and books
 - music
 - symbolism and iconography



The Eternal Jew, a Nazi propaganda film, 1940

Features

- Recurring themes in Nazi propaganda were:
 - anti-Semitic - Jews to blame for all Germany's problems
 - anti-Communist, anti-Socialist, anti-Democratic
 - pro-Nazi
 - pan-Germanic, nationalistic, militaristic
 - Hitler as a Messianic figure

Reichstag Election 1933

- What is the purpose of this piece of propaganda?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What type of source is it?
- What does this source tell us?



"The Reich will never be destroyed if you are united and loyal."

"The essence of propaganda consists in winning people over to an idea so sincerely, so vitally, that in the end they succumb to it utterly and can never escape from it."

Goebbels



Goebbels



Nazi propaganda was led by Dr (Paul) Joseph Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda from 1933 to 1945. In 1933, the Nazis took control of all communication channels

All journalists, writers, and artists were required to register with one of the Ministry's chambers for the press, fine arts, music, theater, film, literature or radio and could only be published with Nazi approval - “un-German” books, films and music were banned

Goebbels was known for his zealous, energetic oratory, and extreme hatred for the Jews;

He is held responsible for Kristallnacht by many historians

Newspapers

The weekly Nazi newspaper Der Stürmer (The Stormer or The Attacker) was devoted primarily to anti-Semitic propaganda and promoting hatred against the Jews.

The motto of the paper was "The Jews are our misfortune" and it was widely read by the lower classes.

In 1927, it sold about 27,000 copies every week; by 1935, its circulation had reached around 480,000.

Julius Streicher was condemned to death at the Nuremberg Trials for crimes against humanity for inciting hatred against the Jews

1934 Stürmer issue: "Storm
above Juda" - criticizing
institutional Churches as
"judaized" organizations.
Caption: I called the Jews a
cursed people, but you have
made out of them the Elect
Nation.

Der Sturmer

Hitler considered Streicher's 'primitive methods' to be effective in influencing the man on the street.

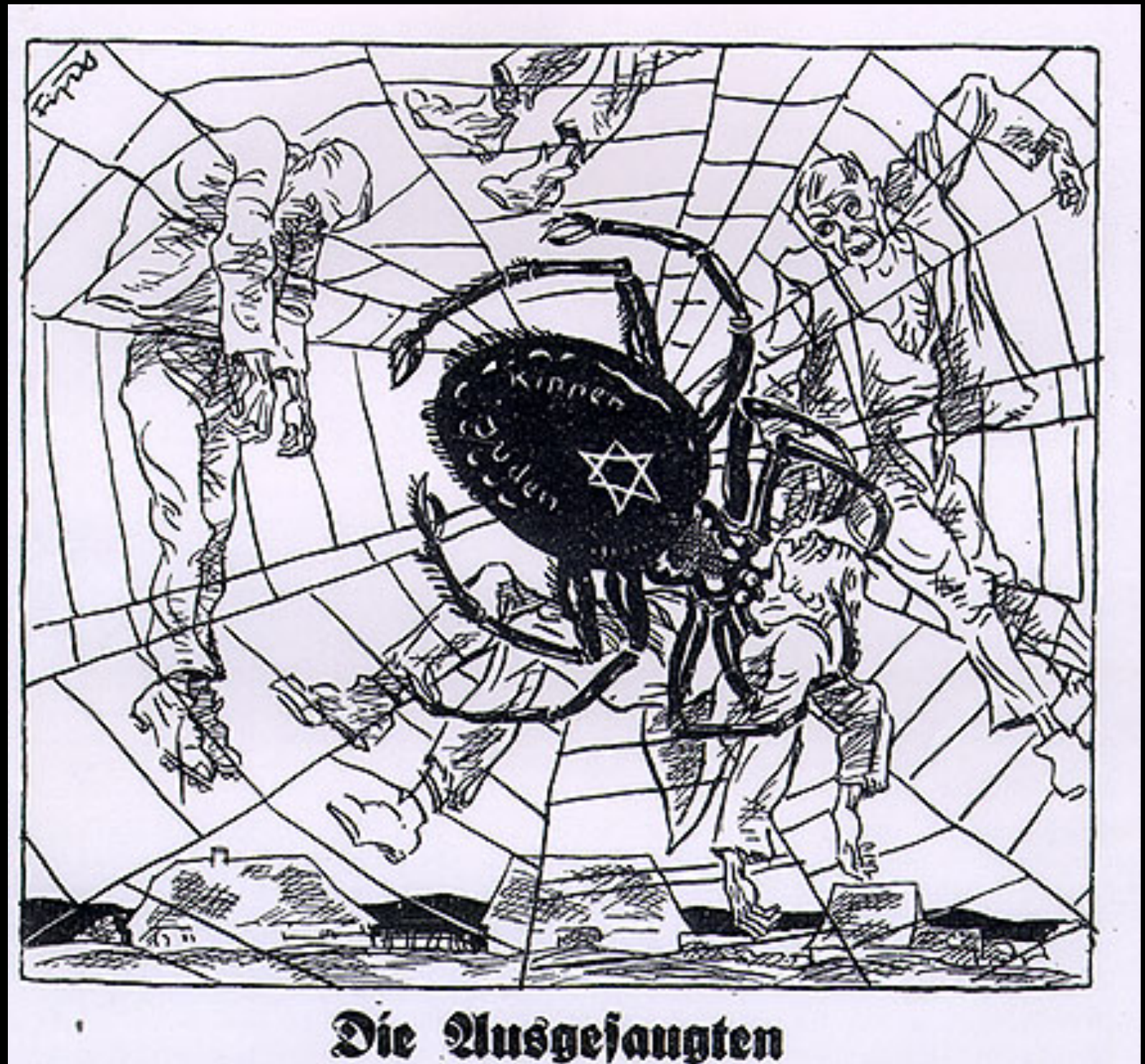
He told a senior Nazi politician in the mid 1930s that:

"Anti-Semitism ... was beyond question the most important weapon in his propagandist arsenal, and almost everywhere it was of deadly efficiency. That was why he had allowed Streicher, for example, a free hand. The man's stuff, too, was amusing, and very cleverly done. It was the one periodical that he always read with pleasure, from the first page to the last".

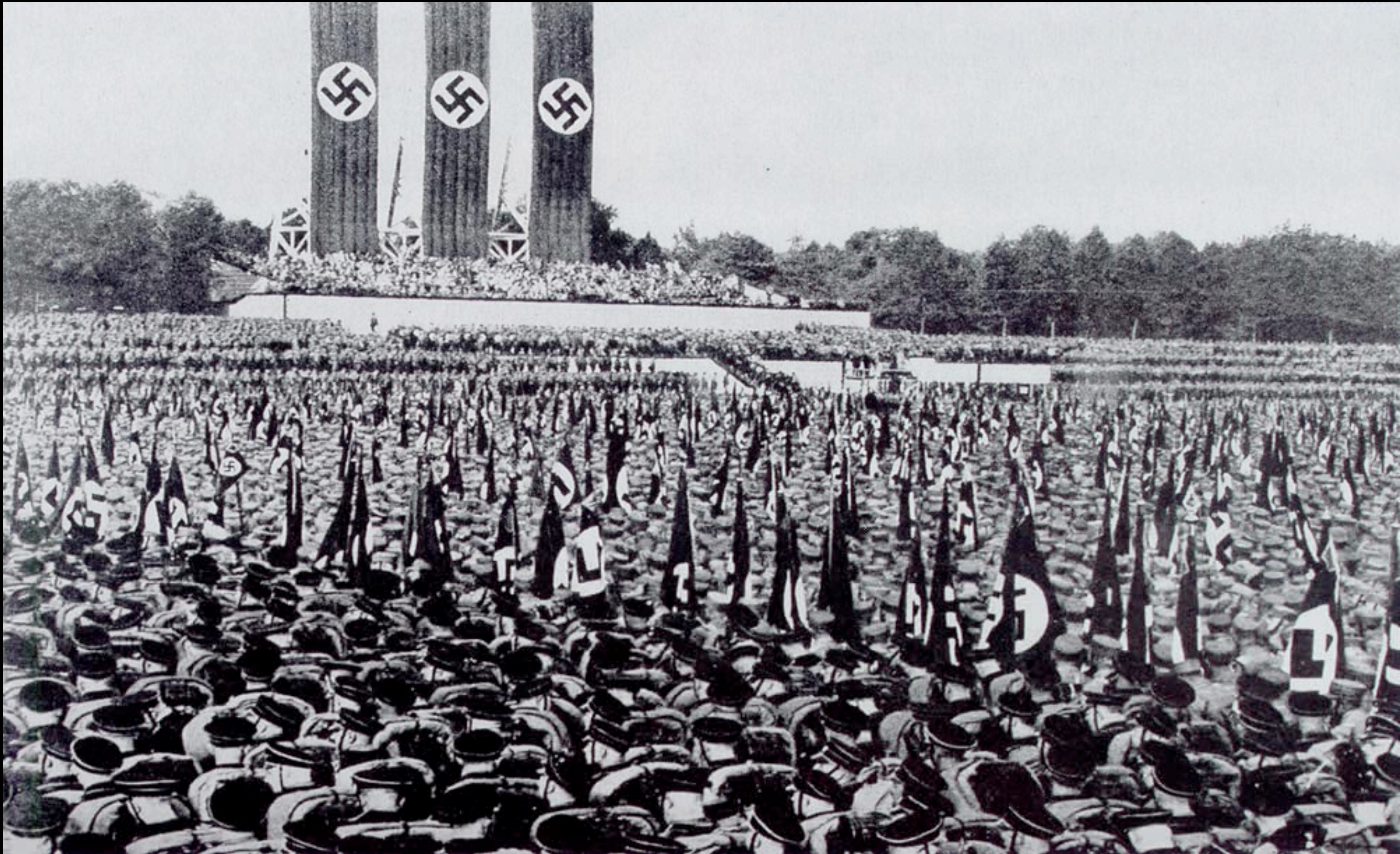
"Sucked dry."

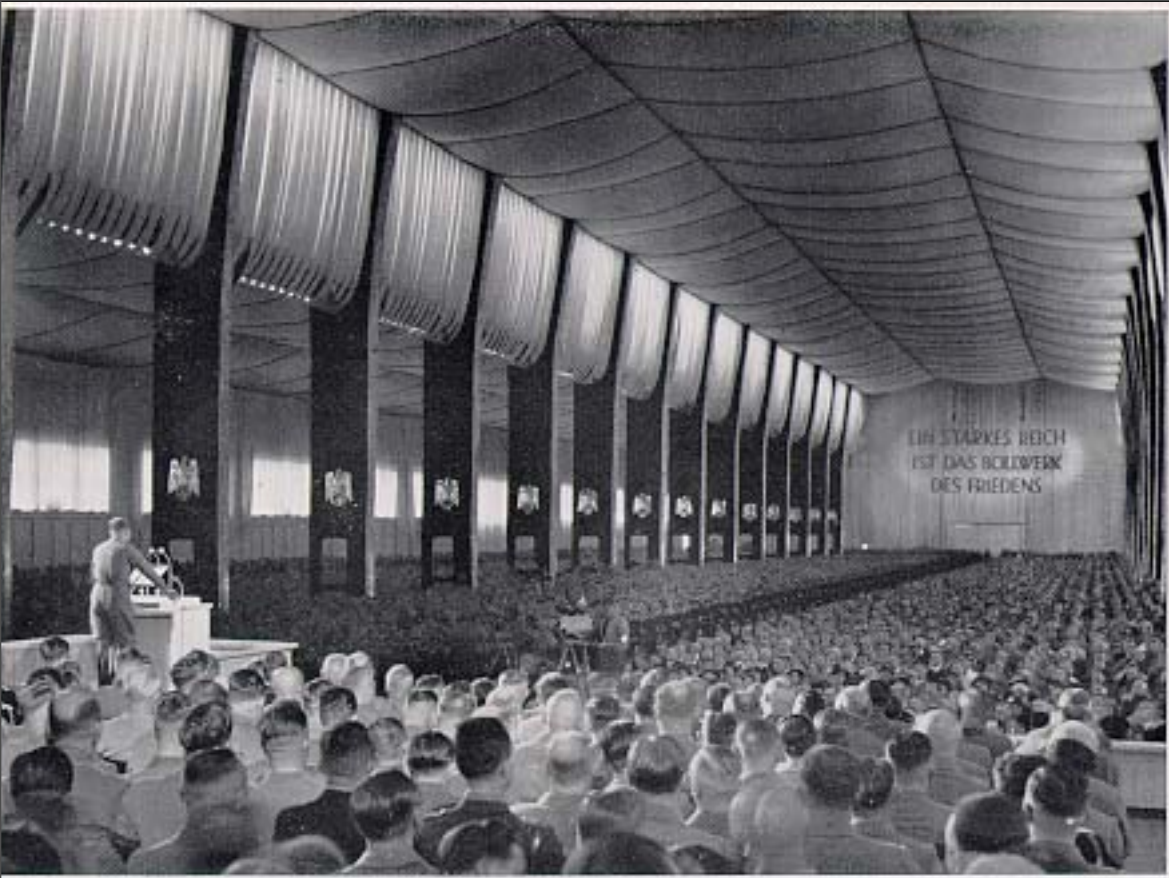
The caricature suggests the Jews are sucking the economic life from Gentiles. It is one of numerous *Stürmer* cartoons comparing Jews to inhuman and unpleasant creatures.

Der Sturmer, February 1930



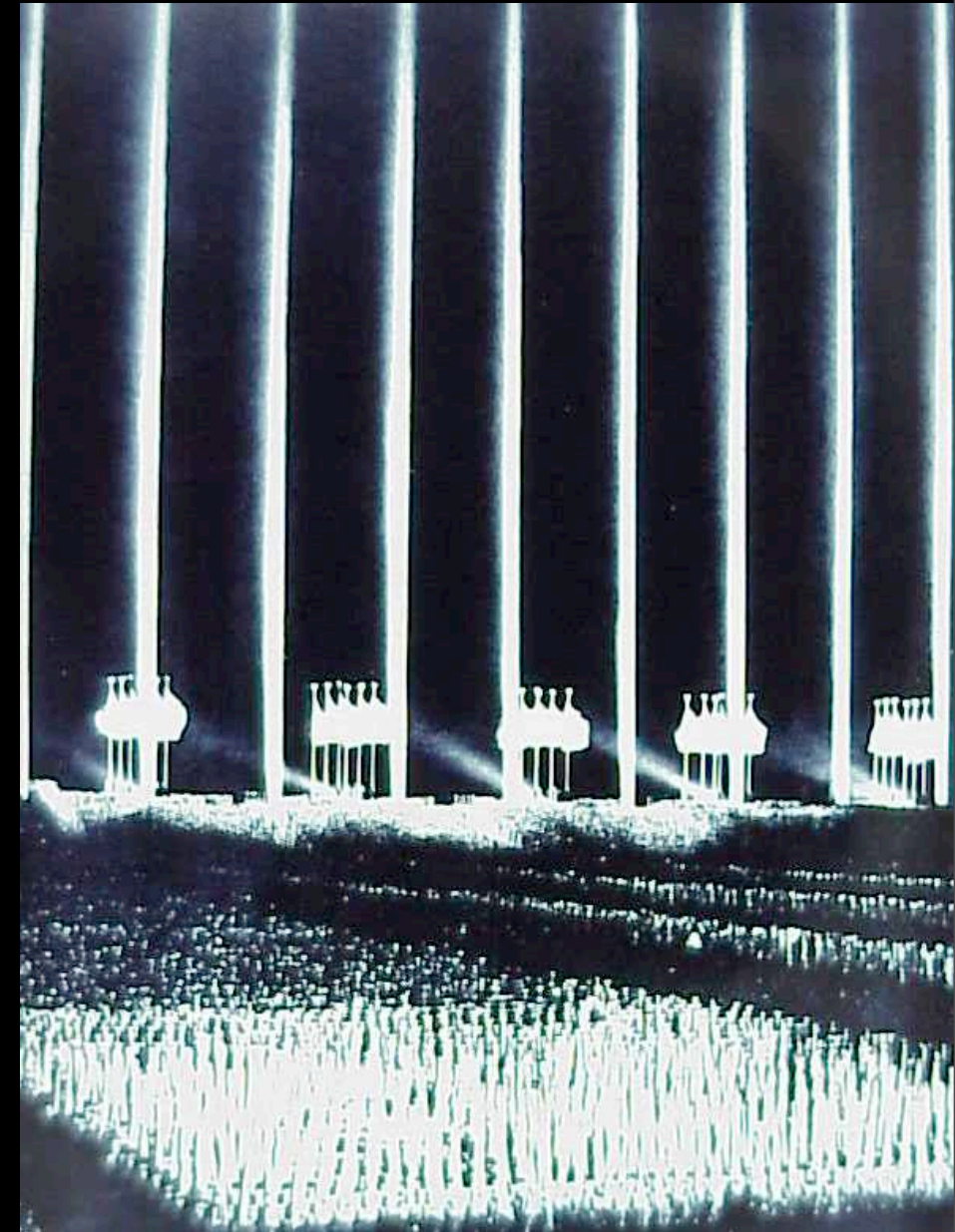
Rallies





Addressing the people, Rudolf Hess opens the Party rally. The slogan at the back of the hall says: "A strong Reich is the bullwark of peace."

Caption: "The high point of the rally. The SS, SA and NSKK march before the Führer."



Goebbels and Albert Speer, organised rallies that were designed to show to the world the might of the Nazi nation.

In August of each year, huge rallies were held at Nuremberg.

Arenas to hold 400,000 people were built. In the famous night time displays, 150 search lights surrounded the main arena and were lit up vertically into the night sky.

Their light could be seen over 100 kilometres away in what a British politician, Sir Neville Henderson, called a "cathedral of light".

Nuremberg Rallies

The first Nazi rallies took place in 1923 in Munich and 1926 in Weimar. From 1927 on, they were held in Nuremberg.

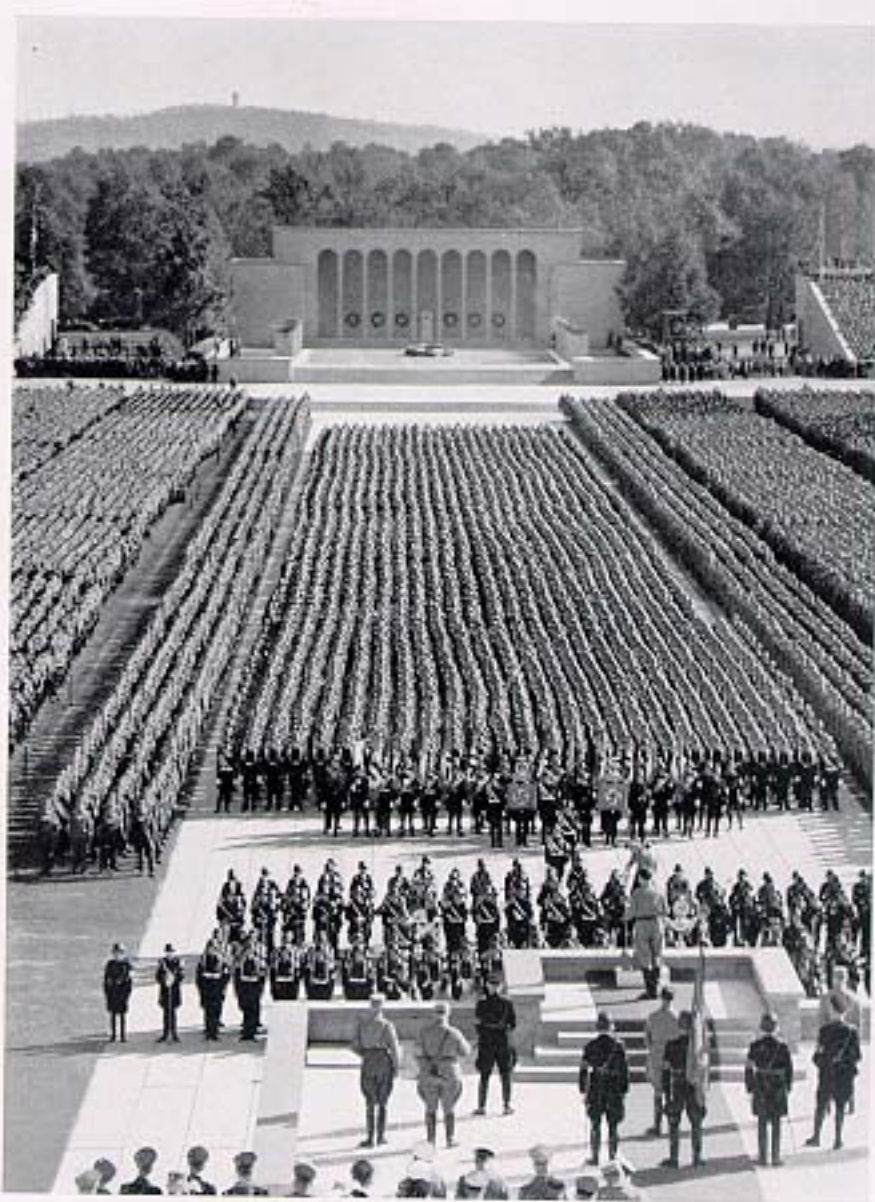
The rallies reached over half a million from all sections of the party, the army and the state, including the Wehrmacht, SS, SA, Labor Service, Hitler Youth etc.).

The Nuremberg rallies to strengthen the personality cult of Adolf Hitler, portraying Hitler as Germany's saviour. Crowds listened ecstatically to the Führer's speeches, swore loyalty and marched before him.

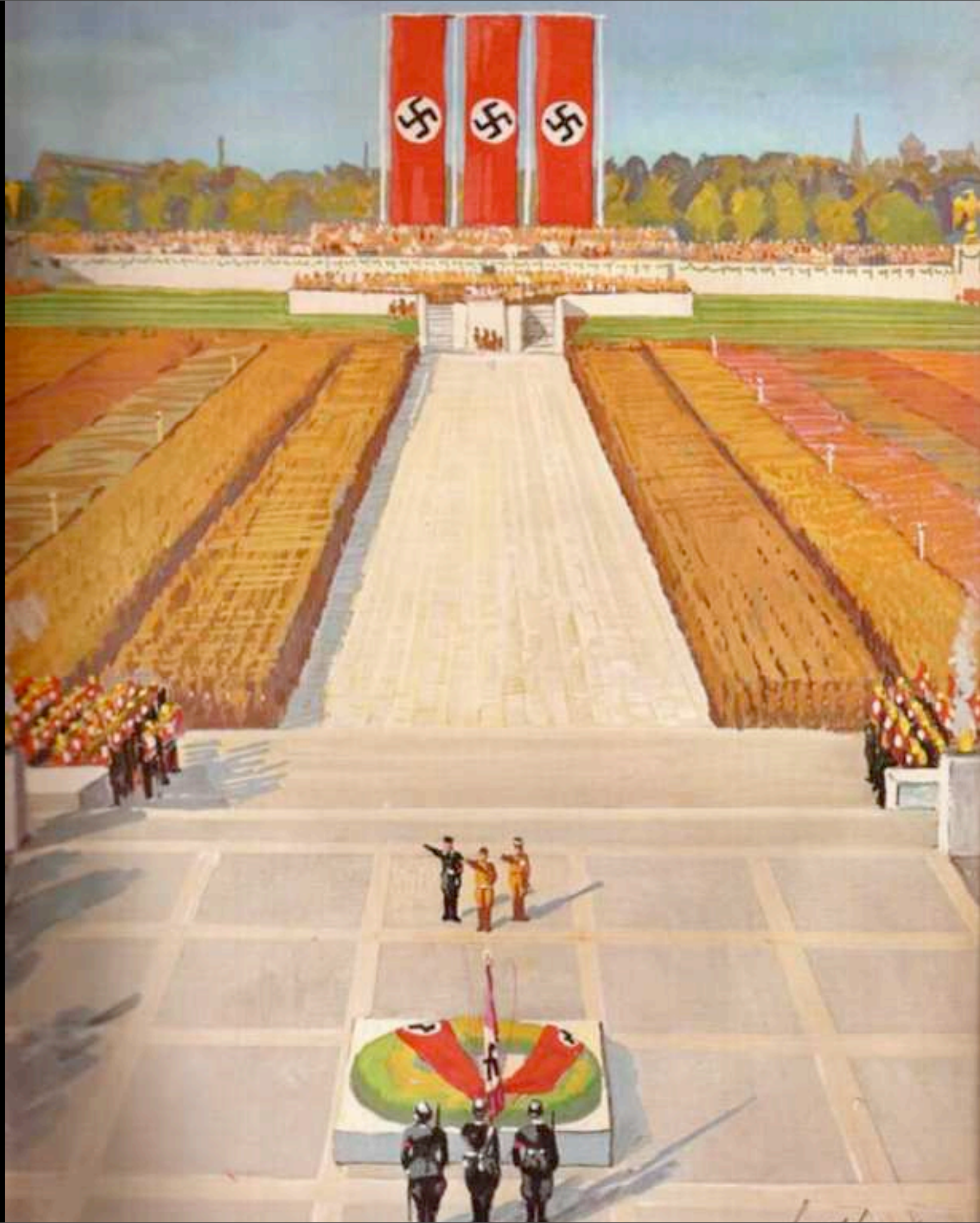
Images of the hero worship of Hitler are often from Nuremberg







Der Höhepunkt des Reichsparteitages: SA, SS, und NSKK, sind in der Zeppelinfeldarena vor dem Führer aufmarschiert



Sieg Heil - Hail Victory

Sieg Heil literally means "Victory Hail" or "hail victory".

During the Nazi era, it was a common call at political rallies like Nuremberg

When meeting someone, it was customary in Nazi Germany to give the Hitler salute and say the words "Heil Hitler".

"Sieg Heil" was reserved for mass meetings such as the ones at Nuremberg where "Sieg Heil" was shouted in unison by thousands.

At such rallies there was often a display of banners carrying the slogan "Sieg Heil" along with the swastika.



Anti-Semitic Exhibits



In November 1937, 'The Eternal Jew' exhibition opened in Munich, and ran until 31 January 1938, claiming to show the 'typical outward features' of Jews and to demonstrate their allegedly Middle Eastern and Asiatic characteristics. The exhibition also attempted to 'expose' a world-wide 'Jewish-Bolshevik' conspiracy.

The exhibition attracted 412,300 visitors, over 5000 per day. The Secret Police reports claimed that it helped to promote a sharp rise in anti-Semitic feelings, and in some cases violence against the Jewish community.

Film

Films released to the public concentrated on:
the Jews;
the greatness of Hitler;
the way of life for a true Germans;
how badly Germans in Eastern
Europe were treated.

Leni Riefenstahl's "Triumph of Will"
is considered one of the greatest of propaganda
films ever made



Film



"Hitlerjunge Quex" (1933) told the story of a boy brought up in a communist family in Germany who broke away from this background, joined the Hitler Youth and was murdered by the Communists in Germany for doing so.

"The Eternal Jew" was a film that vilified the Jews - comparing the Jews in Europe to a hoard of rats, spreading disease etc.

Goebbels ordered that many comedies should be made to give Germany a 'fun' image



Radio

Goebbels organised the sale of cheap radios. these were called the "People's Receiver" and they cost only 76 marks so that people could hear Hitler's speak.

Loud speakers were put up in streets so that people could not avoid any speeches by the Fuhrer.

Cafes and other such properties were ordered to play in public speeches by Hitler.

Poster: "All Germany hears the Führer on the People's Receiver."

Books

The Nazis published a great number of books that promoted:

Nazism

German nationalism

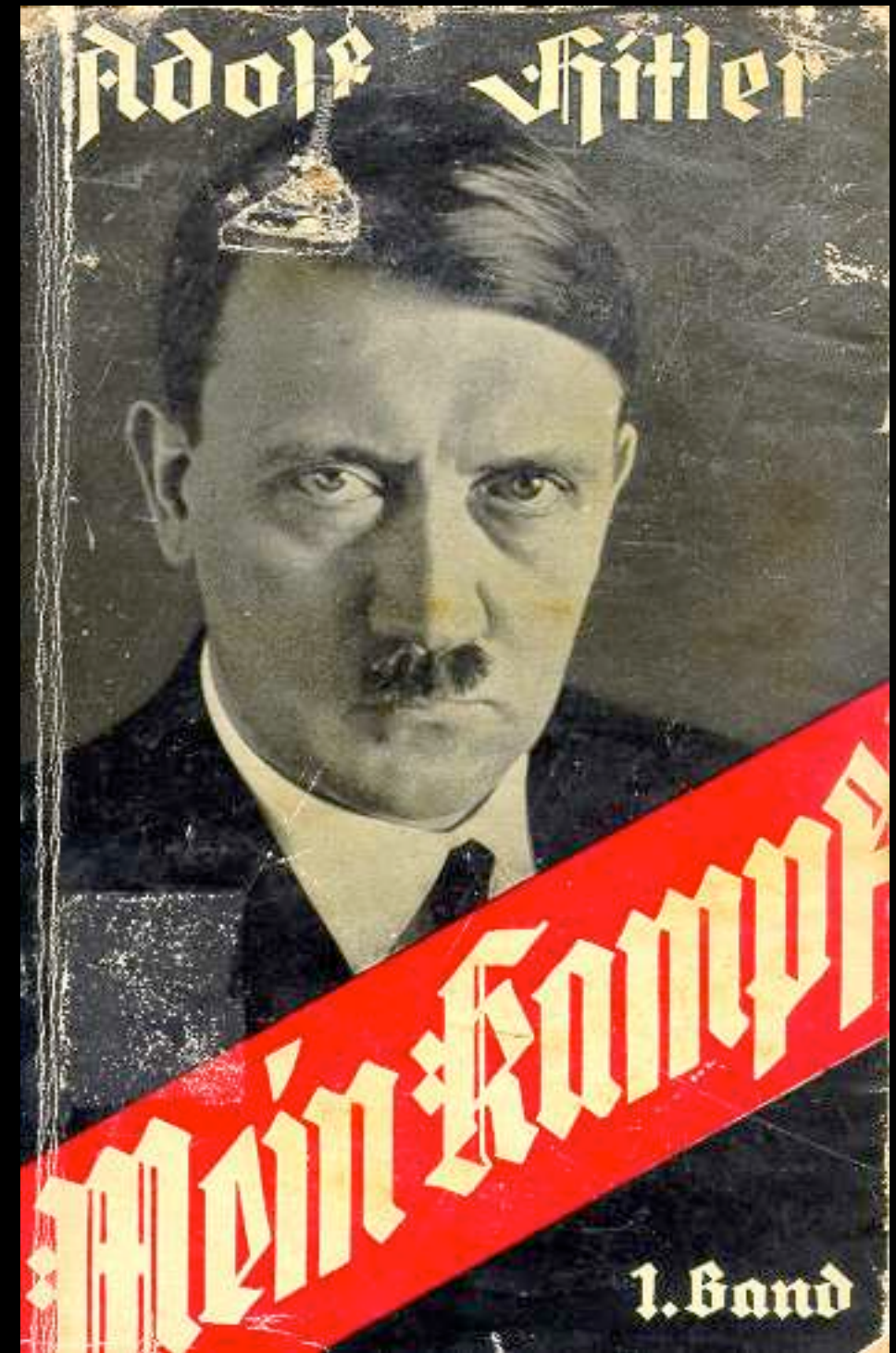
Eugenics

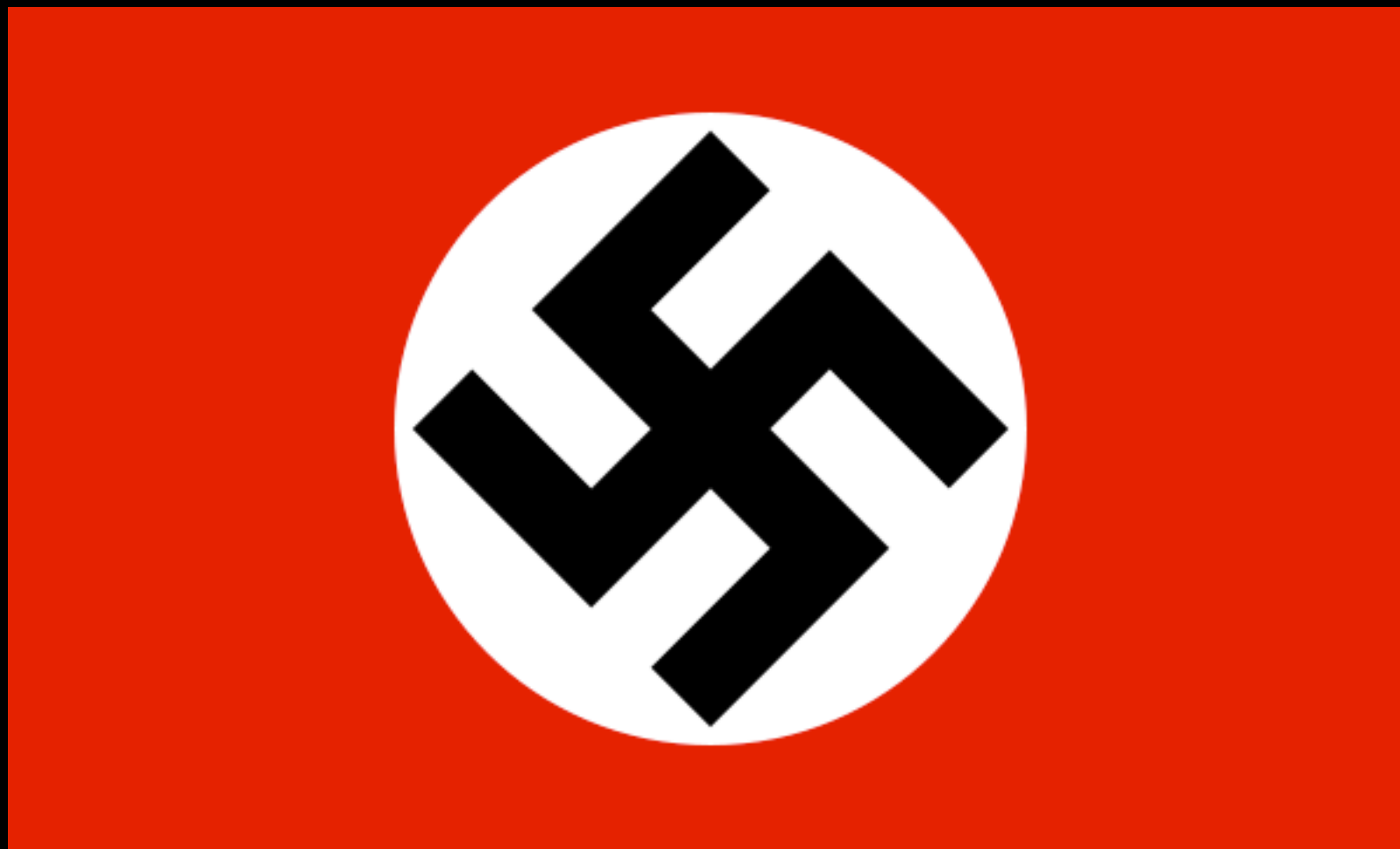
Anti-Semitism - e.g

“Children’s Books” Don’t Trust A Fox in A Green Meadow Or the Word of A Jew), The Poisonous Mushroom

The most notable is Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* or My Struggle

which was a best seller during the Nazi years





Traditionally the swastika has been used as a symbol of good luck, welfare, prosperity or victory in eastern and western cultures.

The Nazis used it on the party's flag, badge and armband. It was adopted as the sole national flag on 15 September 1935. It is now banned in Germany.

Hitler stated: "As National Socialists, we see our program in our flag. In red, we see the social idea of the movement; in white, the nationalistic idea; in the swastika, the mission of the struggle for the victory of the Aryan man, and, by the same token, the victory of the idea of creative work, which as such always has been and always will be anti-Semitic."

For months prior to the 1939 invasion, German newspapers and politicians like Adolf Hitler had carried out a national and international propaganda campaign accusing Polish authorities of organizing or tolerating violent ethnic cleansing of ethnic Germans living in Poland. On 22 August, Adolf Hitler told his generals:

"I will provide a propagandistic casus belli. Its credibility doesn't matter. The victor will not be asked whether he told the truth."

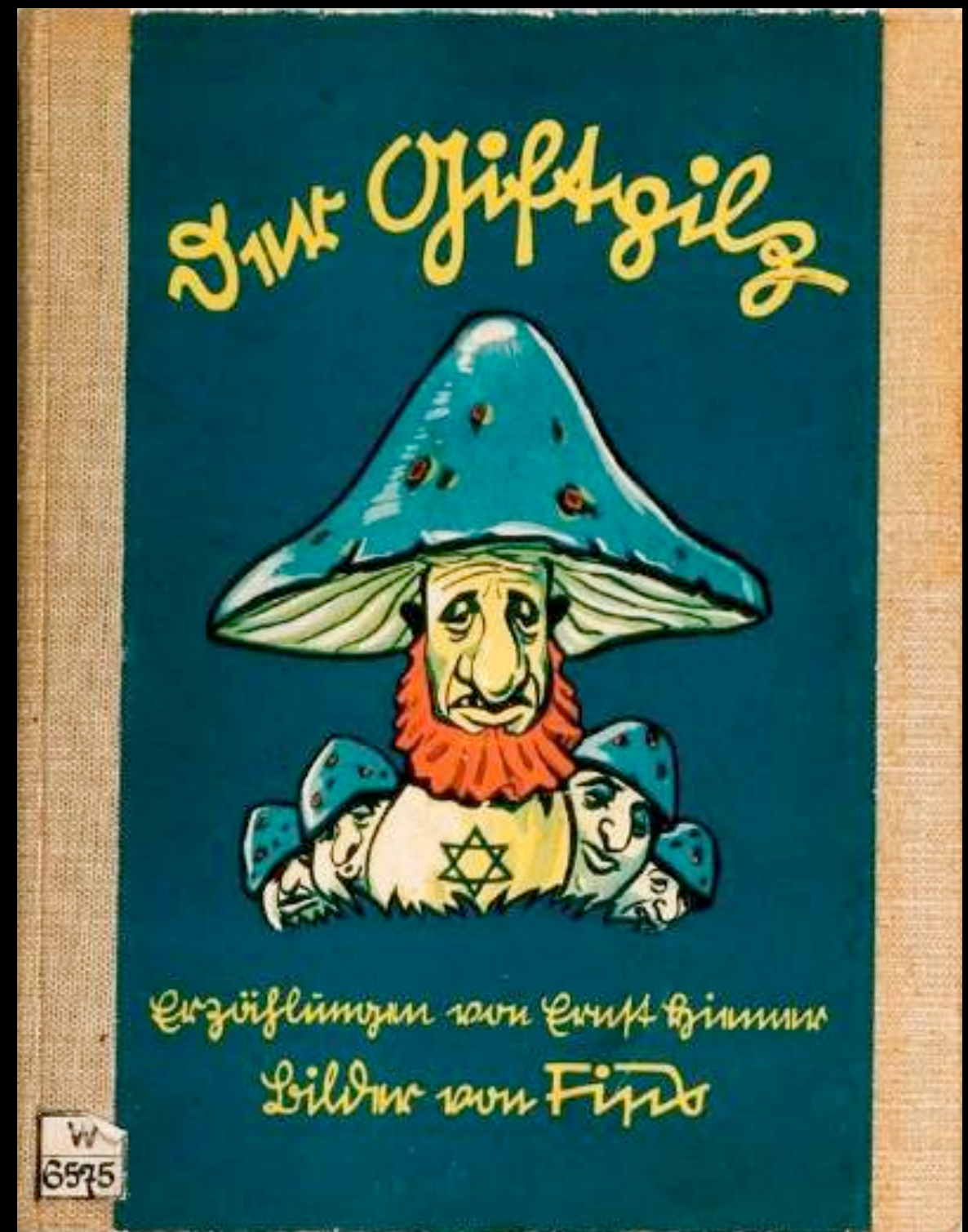
Propaganda was the essence and genius of National Socialism. Flags, uniforms, Sieg Heils, fanfares, marching columns, banners, searchlights, every form of physical stimulation and manipulation was used to mold the Nazi party, and later all of Germany into total compliance with Nazi policy.

Hitler and the Nazis transformed the fears, impulses, and dissatisfaction of the prewar German masses into a subservient political machine, capable of systematic persecution and murder.

Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies



Poster promoting eugenics and euthanasia of disabled people.



"The Jew is the most dangerous poison mushroom in existence," a pious mother teaches her son in this 1938 children's book, which was illustrated by the anti-Semitic cartoonist "Fips" (Philip Rupprecht).



"One People, One Reich, One Führer."



Before: Unemployment, hopelessness, desolation, strikes, lockouts. Today: Work, joy, discipline, comradeship. Give the Führer your vote!"

Sources

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